

Witness Tells of Berrigan

By Betty Medsger
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HARRISBURG, Pa., Feb. 25—A young woman who was a close friend of Boyd Douglas, the government's key witness in the trial of seven anti-war activists, testified today that Douglas urged her in 1970 to participate in draft board raids.

The witness, Jane Hoover, also said that in the summer of that year Douglas told her that "when he got out of prison he wanted to be involved in a meaningful act that would entail using his knowledge of explosives." That "act" would be in Washington, D.C., she said he told her.

Her testimony came in cross-examination by the defense after chief prosecutor William S. Lynch had questioned her on her role in a mail-smuggling and transcribing operation allegedly involving two defendants, Father Philip Berrigan and Sister Elizabeth McAlister.

The defense's cross-examination was clearly designed to attack the credibility of the government's chief witness—Douglas. Former Attorney General Ramsey Clark, in his opening statement for the defense, had called Douglas an "agent provocateur."

Father Berrigan, Sister McAlister and their five co-defendants are charged with conspiracy to kidnap presidential adviser Henry Kissinger, bomb tunnels under federal buildings in Washington and to raid federal offices as protest to the Vietnam war.

Miss Hoover and another Bucknell University coed who followed her to the stand testified only after they were granted immunity from prosecution.

Miss Hoover said she met Douglas June 3, 1970, when she moved into an apartment on the second floor of a house at 204 S. 6th Street in Lewisburg. It was on that same

date, according to a former Lewisburg Penitentiary official who testified Thursday, that prison officials and FBI agents met with Douglas and planned his work as an informer.

Douglas had been a prisoner at Lewisburg since 1967 and a full-time student at Bucknell since January of 1970 under a "study release" program. Douglas, Miss Hoover said, shared an apartment in the same house with Tom Love, a former Bucknell student.

Lynch asked Miss Hoover, a 1971 graduate of Bucknell from Sunbury, Pa., if she had met any of the defendants at four different gatherings she attended in Lewisburg in the summer of 1970. She said she had met defendants Sister McAlister, Anthony and Mary Cain Scoblick, and Fathers Neil McLaughlin and Joseph Wenderoth, all of them introduced to her by Douglas.

Both Miss Hoover and Mary Elizabeth Sandel, the other

THE WASHINGTON POST Saturday, Feb. 26, 1972

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Involvement



Jane Hoover leaves the federal building in Harrisburg, Pa., after testifying for the government in the trial of Father Philip Berrigan and six other defendants.

Associated Press

coed whom Douglas later dated and asked to copy letters, testified today that they heard no talk of draft board raids except as "academic discussion" of whether that was a "good method of protest."

Asked by prosecutor Lynch if she had heard discussion of draft board raids at a particular meeting, she said it was

"not a meeting, just a social gathering," and then added:

"There was a discussion about the war in Vietnam and how bad it was . . . and how it should be protested. Destroying draft boards was just discussed as to whether it was a good method to oppose the war."

Listing separately each of

the five defendants she had met in 1970, defense attorney Terry Lenzner asked Miss Hoover if any of them had ever asked her to participate in a draft board raid. In each case, she said no.

"Did Boyd F. Douglas ever ask you to participate in a draft board raid?" Lenzner asked.

"Yes, he did," said Miss Hoover, with Lynch strongly objecting to the question.

Describing discussions Douglas had with her and other students, Miss Hoover said, "He used to tell us that as students we should be more aware of what was going on and be more committed to go further than demonstrations."

In addition to transcribing letters in his notebook — "because he said he didn't have time to do it" — Miss Hoover said she also agreed to receive letters for Douglas. She identified letters Lynch handed her today as the letters she transcribed for Douglas.

She said they came in envelopes addressed to her with no address on them and usually were inside another envelope marked "Boyd." She said he had a similar mail system set up with his stepbrother, Jack Weckman, who lives in Ambler, a suburb of Philadelphia. She also said she knew neither the source nor ultimate destination of the letters she copied.

Asked by Lynch if either Father McLaughlin or Father Wenderoth, Baltimore parish priests, ever called Boyd Douglas on her apartment phone, Miss Hoover said that they hadn't asked for Douglas but that she thought she recognized Father Wenderoth's voice "once or twice" asking for "Gary or Pete — those were Boyd's . . . I guess you would call it pseudonym." She said he later told her he wanted to use her phone because "he thought the phone downstairs was tapped and didn't want prison authorities to know what he was doing."

As Miss Hoover described another discussion of non-violence versus violence for which some of the defendants and Douglas were present when "we talked about whether or not destruction of property was equivalent of killing people," Lynch asked "what property?"

"No particular property, it was academic," said the witness.